

EMAP-West: Technical Assistance to the States and Tribal Nations on Design and Indicators for Monitoring the Condition of Western Waters

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Section 305(b) of the Clean Water Act (CWA) mandates States and Tribes monitor and assess the extent to which all waters of the state support chemical, physical and biological integrity. EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) has been helping States meet the requirements of Section 305(b) through the use of ecological indicators of aquatic resources and probability survey designs that provide efficient tools for assessing the condition and the relative importance of various causes of impairment in aquatic systems. In addition, landscape assessment of the regions and watersheds affecting these resources is critical to providing sufficient understanding to manage the resources. EMAP-West is a key element in ORD's strategy for improving the environmental monitoring on which EPA policy is based. EMAP-West includes monitoring and assessment of flowing waters in 12 western states, monitoring and assessment of coastal waters in 5 western states and a landscape assessment for the conterminous 12 states of the West.

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